

Standards of Accreditation Chapter 55
Recommended Changes to Chapter 55 Rule Language
Effective 2/29/2012

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
10.55.601 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: PROCEDURES	
(1) The Board of Public Education adopts standards of accreditation upon the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.	No Change
(2) The board and the Office of Public Instruction establish procedures and schedules for reviewing the accreditation status of each school.	No Change
(3) To ensure continuous education improvement, the school district shall develop, implement, evaluate, and revise a five-year comprehensive education plan.	(3) To ensure continuous education improvement, the school district shall develop, implement, and evaluate, and revise a five-year comprehensive education <u>a continuous school improvement plan. This plan shall be reviewed on a yearly basis to reflect a continuous improvement process.</u>
(a) This plan shall include:	No Change
(i) a school district level education profile as described in guidance provided periodically by the Office of Public Instruction;	No Change
(ii) the school district's educational goals in accordance with ARM 10.55.701;	No Change

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(iii) a description of planned progress toward implementing all content, performance, and program area standards, in accordance with the schedule in ARM 10.55.603;	(iii) a description of planned progress toward implementing all content performance , and program area standards, in accordance with the schedule in ARM 10.55.603;
(iv) a description of strategies for assessing student progress toward meeting all content and performance standards, in accordance with ARM 10.55.603; and	(iv) a description of strategies for assessing student progress toward meeting all content and performance standards, in accordance with ARM 10.55.603; and
(v) a professional development component, in accordance with ARM 10.55.714.	No Change
(b) By May 1, 2003, the district trustees shall file their adopted five-year comprehensive education plan with the Office of Public Instruction and make their plan available to employees and the public	(b) By May 1, 2003, t The district trustees shall file their adopted five-year comprehensive education <u>continuous school improvement</u> plan with the Office of Public Instruction and make their plan available to employees and the public
(c) The Office of Public Instruction shall develop and implement procedures necessary to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of each school district's comprehensive education plan.	(c) The Office of Public Instruction shall develop and implement procedures, <u>in consultation with accredited school districts</u> , necessary to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of each school and district's comprehensive education continuous school improvement plan.
(4) To ensure continuous educational improvement and to meet the identified needs of students in every school, every school in the district shall develop and have	(4) To ensure continuous educational improvement, and to meet the identified needs of students in every school, every school in the district shall develop and have on file in the district office a comprehensive education <u>continuous school improvement plan, appropriately aligned with</u>

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on file in the district office a comprehensive education plan.	<u>the school district continuous school improvement plan.</u>
(5) To ensure continuous educational improvement, the Office of Public Instruction shall provide guidance, resources, and evaluation to assist in the implementation of district and school plans to improve teaching and learning for all students.	No Change
(6) School districts are required to maintain present programs that meet current standards until such standards are superseded. The content and performance standards will supersede model learner goals according to the following schedule:	<p>(6) School districts are required to maintain present programs that meet current standards until such standards are superseded. The content and performance standards will supersede model learner goals according to the following schedule:</p> <p><u>A school district shall align its curriculum to the state content standards and program area standards as adopted by the Board of Public Education. A school district shall maintain programs to align with the state's schedule for revising standards.</u></p>
(a) Reading -- November 1998;	(a) Reading -- November 1998;
(b) Mathematics -- November 1998;	(b) Mathematics -- November 1998;
(c) Science -- October 1999;	(c) Science -- October 1999;
(d) Technology -- October 1999;	(d) Technology -- October 1999;

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(e) Health enhancement -- October 1999;	(e) Health enhancement -- October 1999;
(f) Communication arts aligned to the reading content and performance standards - October 1999;	(f) Communication arts aligned to the reading content and performance standards -- October 1999;
(g) World languages -- October 1999;	(g) World languages -- October 1999;
(h) Social studies -- October 2000;	(h) Social studies -- October 2000;
(i) Arts -- October 2000;	(i) Arts -- October 2000;
(j) Library media -- October 2000;	(j) Library media -- October 2000;
(k) Workplace competencies -- October 2000;	(k) Workplace competencies -- October 2000;
(l) Vocational/technical education -- October 2001.	(l) Vocational/technical education -- October 2001.
(7) On or before July 1, 2004, a school district shall align its curriculum to the state content and performance standards and program area standards as adopted by the Board of Public Education. A school district shall maintain programs to align with the state's schedule for revising standards.	(7) On or before July 1, 2004, a school district shall align its curriculum to the state content and performance standards and program area standards as adopted by the Board of Public Education. A school district shall maintain programs to align with the state's schedule for revising standards.

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10.55.602 DEFINITIONS	Refer to subcommittee, work in progress
For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms apply:	No Change
	(1) <u>"Accreditation" means the placement of a school into a specific status based on an evaluation of the operations of the institution requiring compliance with certain predetermined minimum standards.</u>
	(2) <u>"At-risk student" means any student who is affected by environmental conditions that negatively impact the student's educational performance or threaten a student's likelihood of promotion or graduation. 20-1-101 (4) MCA</u>
(1) "Assessment" means the gathering, organizing, and evaluation of information about student learning in order to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the instructional program.	(1) (3) "Assessment" means the gathering, organizing, and evaluation of information about student learning in order to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the instructional program.
(2) "Asynchronous" means not occurring at the same time. "Asynchronous" refers to content, instruction, and communication between participants (e.g., students and teachers) that occurs at different times, the period of which may vary by circumstance, (e.g., e-mail, threaded discussions, homework, message boards).	(2) (4) "Asynchronous" means not occurring at the same time. "Asynchronous" refers to content, instruction, and communication between participants (e.g., students and teachers) that occurs at different times, the period of which may vary by circumstance, (e.g., e-mail, threaded discussions, homework, message boards).
(3) "Benchmark" means expectations for a	(3) "Benchmark" means expectations for a student's knowledge, skills, and

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student's knowledge, skills, and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points: the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8, and upon graduation (grade 12).	abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points: the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8, and upon graduation (grade 12).
(4) "Certification" means licensure of an educator/specialist, as issued by the state of Montana, based on completion of an approved teacher, administrator, or specialist program of an accredited college/university. Certification includes grade level(s), endorsement(s), and classification.	(4) (5) "Licensure" "Certification" means licensure <u>certification</u> of an educator/specialist, as issued by the state of Montana, based on completion of an approved <u>educator preparation</u> teacher, administrator, or specialist program. of an accredited college/university. Certification <u>Licensure</u> includes <u>indicates</u> grade level(s), endorsement(s), and classification.
(5) "Combined elementary-high school district" means an elementary district and a high school district which are combined for district administration purposes, including districts designated as "K-12 districts" pursuant to 20-6-701, MCA. Most town school districts in Montana would fit this category, i.e., Helena, Hamilton, Whitehall.	(5) (6) "Combined elementary-high school district" means an elementary district and a high school district, which are combined for district administration purposes, including districts designated as "K-12 districts" pursuant to 20-6-701, MCA. Most town school districts in Montana would fit this category, i.e., Helena, Hamilton, Whitehall.
(6) "Content standard" means what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area, such as reading, mathematics, or social studies.	(6) (7) "Content standard" means what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area, such as reading, mathematics, or social studies.

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(7) "Deviation" means a citation of non-compliance with any given standard.	(7) (8) "Deviation" means a citation of non-compliance with any given standard.
(8) "Distance learning" means instruction in which students and teachers are separated by time and/or location with synchronous or asynchronous content, instruction, and communication between student and teacher (e.g., correspondence courses, online learning, videoconferencing, streaming video).	(8) (9) "Distance learning" means instruction in which students and teachers are separated by time and/or location with synchronous or asynchronous content, instruction, and communication between student and teacher (e.g., correspondence courses, online learning, videoconferencing, streaming video). <u>This instruction may consist of learning opportunities provided through online (Internet based) and other emerging technologies, videoconferencing, streaming video and correspondence methods.</u>
(9) "Endorsement" means an official indication on a license of the subject area(s) and/or specialized program area(s) for which the holder of the license is authorized to practice in Montana accredited schools.	(9) (10) "Endorsement" means an official indication on a license of the subject area(s) and/or specialized program area(s) for which the holder of the license is authorized to practice in Montana accredited schools.
(10) "Independent elementary school district" means a district organized for the purpose of providing public education for all or any combination of grades kindergarten through 8.	(10) (11) "Independent elementary school district" means a district organized for the purpose of providing public education for all or any combination of grades kindergarten through 8.
	(12) <u>"Internship" means an agreement among a fully licensed Class 1, 2, or 3 educator, the school district, and a Montana educator preparation program accredited by the Board of Public Education. The educator agrees to complete the requirements for the endorsement, the school district provides local supervision and support of the intern, and the</u>

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	<p><u>accredited educator preparation program provides coursework, support and periodic supervision.</u></p> <p><u>(a) Internship agreements are permitted in endorsement areas approved by the BPE in Chapter 57, specifically, areas of teaching, library, school counseling, principal and superintendent.</u></p> <p><u>(b) The intern is considered appropriately assigned for up to three years while enrolled in and making progress toward completion of the program. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the State Superintendent as authorized under ARM 10.57.109, Unusual Cases. Requests for extension must be requested jointly by the accredited educator preparation program and the school district, and demonstrate evidence of extreme hardship or other circumstances beyond the control of the intern which prevented timely completion.</u></p> <p><u>(c) The accredited educator preparation programs shall report enrolled interns to the OPI between October 1 and November 15 each year. The school district shall report the yearly progress of the intern to the OPI during the annual data collection at the beginning of years two and three of the internship.</u></p>
	<p><u>(13) “Intensive Assistance” means a required process for schools in continuous or serious deficiency accreditation status. Such schools have failed to develop or implement an approved corrective plan to remedy deviations within the designated timeline,</u></p> <p><u>including persistently low student achievement.</u></p>

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	(14) <u>"Learning progression" means the specific performance expectations in each content area at each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12. These K-12 grade-specific standards define end-of-year expectations and a cumulative progression designed to enable students to meet college and career readiness expectations no later than the end of high school.</u>
	(15) <u>Literacy is learning to read, write, speak, listen and use language effectively.</u>
(11) "Part-time" means not less than six hours in a school week.	(16) <u>Refer to subcommittee, work in progress</u>
(12) "Performance standard" means the specific expectations for performance in each content area at each of the three benchmarks. Performance standards define the quality of performance and describe the performance to be demonstrated.	(12) "Performance standard" means the specific expectations for performance in each content area at each of the three benchmarks. Performance standards define the quality of performance and describe the performance to be demonstrated.
	(17) <u>"Principal" means a person who holds a valid Montana class 3 educator license with an applicable principal endorsement and who is employed by a district as a principal, or who is enrolled in a Board of Public Education approved principal internship program under ARM 10.55.703.</u>
(13) "Program area standards" means the subject matter Montana school districts are required to offer and the strategies and proven practices used to instruct. The	(13) (18) "Program area standards" means the subject matter Montana school districts are required to offer and the strategies and proven practices used to instruct. The program area standards include:

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program area standards include: communication arts, arts, health enhancement, mathematics, science, social studies, career and vocational/technical education, technology, workplace competencies, library media, world languages and school counseling.	communication arts , English language arts, arts, health enhancement, mathematics, science, social studies, career and vocational/technical education, technology, workplace competencies, library media, world languages, and school counseling.
(14) "Program delivery standards" means the conditions, practices and resources school districts are required to provide for all students to have educational opportunities to learn, develop and demonstrate learning to content and performance standards.	(14) (19) "Program delivery standards" means the conditions <u>and</u> practices and resources school districts are required to provide for <u>all</u> <u>ensuring that every</u> students to have <u>is afforded</u> educational opportunities to learn, develop, and demonstrate <u>learning achievement</u> to in content and performance standards <u>and content specific grade-level learning progressions</u> .
(15) "Online learning" means education activity in which instruction and content are delivered primarily via the internet. Online learning is a form of distance learning.	(15) (20) "Online learning" means education activity in which instruction and content are delivered primarily via the Internet <u>and through emerging technologies</u> . Online learning is a form of distance learning.
(16) "School administrator" means a person who is a part of the school's administrative or supervisory staff and who holds a class 3 license and is appropriately endorsed, or who is enrolled in a Board of Public Education approved administrator internship program under ARM 10.55.702 through	(16) (21) "School administrator" means a person who is a part of the school's administrative or supervisory staff and who holds a class 3 license and is appropriately endorsed, or who is enrolled in a Board of Public Education approved administrator internship program under ARM 10.55.702 through 10.55.705.

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10.55.705.	
(17) "Synchronous" means occurring at the same time. "Synchronous" refers to content, instruction, and communication between participants (e.g., students and teachers) that occurs at the same time even though they may be in different physical locations. For example, instruction in which students and teachers are online at the same time so that a question can be immediately answered (e.g., telephone calls, face-to-face meetings, physical classrooms, chat rooms, and videoconferencing).	(17) <u>(22)</u> "Synchronous" means occurring at the same time. "Synchronous" refers to content, instruction, and communication between participants (e.g., students and teachers) that occurs at the same time even though they may be in different physical locations. For example, instruction in which students and teachers are online at the same time so that a question can be immediately answered (e.g., telephone calls, face-to-face meetings, physical classrooms, chat rooms, and videoconferencing).
	<u>(23) "Superintendent" means a person who holds a valid Montana class 3 educator license, with an applicable superintendent's endorsement and who is employed by a district as a district superintendent, or who is enrolled in a Board of Public Education approved superintendent internship program under ARM 10.55.702.</u>
	<u>(24) "Teacher" means a person who holds a valid Montana educator license, excluding superintendents, and who is employed by a district as a member of its instructional, supervisory, or administrative staff. MCA 20-1-101 (26).</u>

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<p>(18) "Technology delivered learning" means instruction and content delivered via digital technologies (e.g., online, CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, or learning experiences that involve primarily the use of computers).</p>	<p>(18) <u>(25)</u> "Technology delivered learning" means instruction and content delivered via digital technologies (e.g., online, CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, or learning experiences that involve primarily the use of computers).</p>
10.55.603 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT	



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(1) Local school districts shall incorporate all content and performance standards into their curriculum, implementing them sequentially and developmentally. School districts shall assess the progress of all students toward achieving content and performance standards in all program areas. Assessment of all students shall be used to examine the educational program and measure its effectiveness based on the content and performance standards.	(1) Local school districts shall incorporate all content performance standards <u>and the appropriate learning progression for each grade level</u> into their curriculum. implementing them sequentially and developmentally School districts shall assess the progress of all students toward achieving content performance standards <u>and content specific grade-level learning progressions</u> in all <u>each</u> program areas. Assessment of all students shall be used to examine the educational program and measure its effectiveness based on the content and performance standards <u>and content specific grade-level learning progressions</u> .
(a) The examination of program effectiveness using assessment results shall be supplemented with information about graduates and other students no longer in attendance.	No Change
(b) The information obtained shall be considered in curriculum and assessment development.	No Change
(2) For content and performance standards in all program areas in accordance with ARM 10.55.602(8), school districts shall:	(2) For content and performance standards in all program areas in accordance with ARM 10.55.602(8), school districts shall:

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(a) establish curriculum and assessment development processes as a cooperative effort of personnel certified and endorsed in the program area and trustees, administrators, other teachers, students, specialists, parents, community and, when appropriate, tribal representatives and state resource people;	(a) establish curriculum and assessment development processes as a cooperative effort of personnel <u>licensed</u> certified and endorsed in the program area, and trustees, administrators, other teachers, students, specialists, parents, community and, when appropriate, tribal representatives and state resource people;
(b) review curricula at intervals not exceeding five years and modify as needed to meet educational goals of the five-year comprehensive education plan in accordance with ARM 10.55.601;	(b) review curricula at intervals not exceeding five years and, modify, as needed, to meet educational goals of the five-year comprehensive education plan <u>continuous school improvement plan</u> in accordance with ARM 10.55.601;
(c) at least every five years, review and select materials and resources necessary for implementation of the curriculum and assessment that are consistent with the goals of the five-year comprehensive education plan; and	(c) at least every five years, review and select materials and resources necessary for implementation of the curriculum and assessment that are consistent with the goals of the five-year comprehensive education <u>continuous school improvement</u> plan; and
(d) review curricula to ensure the inclusion of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians.	No Change

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(3) School district assessment plans shall be included in the comprehensive education plan.	(3) School district assessment plans shall be included in the comprehensive education <u>continuous school improvement</u> plan.
(a) School districts shall use effective and appropriate multiple measures and methods to assess student progress in achieving content and performance standards in all program areas.	(a) School districts shall use effective and appropriate multiple measures and methods to assess student progress in achieving content and performance standards <u>and appropriate content specific grade-level learning progressions</u> in all program areas.
(b) Utilizing input from representatives of accredited schools, the Office of Public Instruction shall develop criteria and procedures for the selection of effective and appropriate multiple measures and methods to be used to assess student progress in reading and mathematics in grades 4, 8 and 11.	(b) Utilizing input from representatives of accredited schools, the Office of Public Instruction shall develop criteria and procedures for the selection of effective and appropriate multiple measures and methods to be used to assess student progress in reading and mathematics in grades 4, 8 and 11 <u>achieving content and appropriate content specific grade-level learning progressions in all program areas.</u>
(c) The Office of Public Instruction shall provide technical assistance to districts to meet the criteria and procedures in (3)(b).	No Change

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<p>(d) Not later than the school year immediately following the completion of written sequential curricula aligned with the content and performance standards in a program area in accordance with ARM 10.55.601(6), the school district shall begin the development of a student assessment process for that program area. The assessment process must be in place two years following the development of written curriculum.</p>	<p>(d) Not later than the school year immediately following the completion of written sequential curricula aligned with the content and performance standards in a program area in accordance with ARM 10.55.601(6), the school district shall begin the development of a student assessment process for that program area. The assessment process must be in place two years following the development of written curriculum.</p>
	<p><u>(e) The measures used to report to the Office of Public Instruction shall be included within the district assessment plan in accordance with ARM 10.55.601.</u></p>

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(4) In addition to the school-by-school reporting of norm-referenced testing results in accordance with ARM 10.56.101, districts shall annually report to the Office of Public Instruction the school level results of measures for the standards that are not adequately assessed by the norm-referenced tests in reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8 and 11.	(4) In addition to the school-by-school reporting of norm-referenced testing results in accordance with ARM 10.56.101, districts shall annually report to the Office of Public Instruction the school level results of measures for the standards that are not adequately assessed by the norm-referenced tests in reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8 and 11.
(a) Utilizing input from representatives of accredited schools, the Office of Public Instruction will identify the additional standards in reading and mathematics that are to be assessed with other measures.	(a) Utilizing input from representatives of accredited schools, the Office of Public Instruction will identify the additional standards in reading and mathematics that are to be assessed with other measures.
(b) The measures used to report to the Office of Public Instruction shall be included within the district assessment plan in accordance with ARM 10.55.601.	(b) The measures used to report to the Office of Public Instruction shall be included within the district assessment plan in accordance with ARM 10.55.601.

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<p>(c) The criteria and procedures set forth in (3)(b) shall be used by the Office of Public Instruction in an approval process to assure the quality of the other measures that will be used to assess and report progress in reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8 and 11</p>	<p>(c) The criteria and procedures set forth in (3)(b) shall be used by the Office of Public Instruction in an approval process to assure the quality of the other measures that will be used to assess and report progress in reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8 and 11</p>

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10.55.604 VARIANCES TO STANDARDS	
(1) A school district may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement an alternative to a standard or a section of standards, excluding standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to teacher licensure or endorsement, and content and performance standards as defined by the Board of Public Education and provided in guidance from the Superintendent of Public Instruction.	(1) A school district may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement <u>an alternative a variance</u> to a standard or a section of standards, excluding standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to teacher licensure or endorsement, and content and performance standards as defined by the Board of Public Education and provided in guidance from the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
(a) In its application, the school district shall provide evidence establishing that its alternative is workable and educationally sound in comparison to the intent of the standard(s) that would be waived, and shall establish that the goals of the alternative will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).	(a) In its application, the school district shall <u>provide evidence outline how and why its establishing that its alternative proposed variance would be is workable, and educationally sound, in comparison and designed to meet or exceed results under established standards and, where applicable, align with program</u> to the intent of the standards(s) 10.55.1101-1901 that would be waived, and shall establish that the goals of the alternative will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).

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(b) In its application, the school district shall submit a statement of mission and objectives, and identify formative and summative measures to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the alternative.	(b) In its application, the a school district shall submit a statement of mission and objectives, and identify formative and summative measures to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the alternative. <u>provides evidence through official minutes of the board of trustees that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of its proposed alternative and shall include the signature of those in support of the proposal.</u>
(c) Upon appropriate application, the Board of Public Education shall approve or deny the proposed alternative.	(c) Upon appropriate application, the Board of Public Education shall approve or deny the proposed alternative. <u>Stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers, classified school staff, parents, community members, and students as applicable.</u>
(d) If the board denies the proposed alternative, it shall state in writing why it has done so.	(d) If the board denies the proposed alternative, it shall state in writing why it has done so. <u>A district shall provide evidence that it adopted in its application for variance at an official, properly noticed meeting of its board of trustees.</u>
(e) If the board approves the proposed alternative, its initial approval shall be for two years.	(e) If the board approves the proposed alternative, its initial approval shall be for two years. <u>An application for variance is due in writing to the Superintendent of Public Instruction no later than the first Monday in March or the first Monday in July.</u>
(f) During the second year of the initial approval, the Board of Public Education, through the Office of Public Instruction, shall direct an on-site evaluation of the alternative.	(f) During the second year of the initial approval, the Board of Public Education, through the Office of Public Instruction, shall direct an on-site evaluation of the alternative. <u>Upon receipt, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall refer applications for variance to standards to a pre-appointed review board. The Office of Public Instruction shall facilitate and provide organizational support for the meetings of the review board.</u>

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(g) If the board finds the alternative is workable and educationally sound in comparison to how the waived standard(s), previously worked in the district, the board shall renew the alternative for five years.	(g) If the board finds the alternative is workable and educationally sound in comparison to how the waived standard(s), previously worked in the district, the board shall renew the alternative for five years. <u>The review board shall consist of the following, appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction from a list of qualifying individuals jointly endorsed by MEA-MFT, MREA, MSSA, MTSBA and SAM: 1 trustee, 1 superintendent, 1 high school principal, 1 elementary principal, 2 high school teachers and 2 elementary teachers.</u>
	(i) <u>As needed, the review board shall seek advice from experts.</u> a. <u>The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall solicit a pool of experts from curriculum groups and educational associations to serve “on call” in advisory capacity.</u> b. <u>The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify the review board of the pool participants with rationale and present them for review board approval.</u> c. <u>The review board shall notify the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction when and what types of experts are needed.</u> d. <u>The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify the appropriate pool of expert(s) of this needed input and arrange for the pool member(s) to advise the committee.</u>
	(ii) <u>The review board shall serve 5 year terms with no limit to the number of terms any one person may serve. Terms shall be staggered where half of all positions shall be filled every three years prior to the first meeting of committee in the third year.</u>

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(h) Subject to on-site evaluations every five years, the board may continue to renew the alternative.	(h) Subject to on-site evaluations every five years, the board may continue to renew the alternative. <u>The review board shall review all applications and use a uniform rubric, made available to districts in advance of applying to implement a variance to a standard or section of standards. The uniform rubric will ensure consistent and high quality applications from school districts across Montana. The review board shall provide their recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Board of Public Education.</u>
(i) A school district may discontinue an approved alternative at any time. If it does so, it shall promptly notify the Board of Public Education in writing.	(i) A school district may discontinue an approved alternative at any time. If it does so, it shall promptly notify the Board of Public Education in writing. <u>The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide the Board of Public Education with a recommendation for approval, modification or rejection of the review board's recommendation.</u>
	<u>(j) If the Superintendent of Public Instruction or review board finds an application to be preliminarily deficient, the Superintendent shall advise the applicant school district why that application is not ready for consideration,</u>
	<u>(k) The applicant district shall have the opportunity to change its application as suggested or submit it as originally proposed.</u>
	<u>(2) The Board of Public Education shall approve or deny proposed variances to standards.</u>

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	(a) <u>If the Board denies a proposed variance to standards, it shall remit in writing to the applicant school district why it has done so.</u>
	(b) <u>If the Board approves a proposed variance to standards, it shall initially do so for no more than two (2) years pending ongoing review of the implementation by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.</u>
	(c) <u>Following the second year of implementation of a variance to standards, the school district shall provide evidence to the Superintendent of Public Instruction that the methods selected by the district to implement, meet or exceed results that could have been achieved under established standards.</u>
	(d) <u>If the Superintendent of Public Instruction finds the variance is workable and educationally sound, the Superintendent shall report findings and recommend continued approval to the Board of Public Education.</u>
	(e) <u>If the Board concurs with the Superintendent's recommendation, it may renew the variance for no more than three years.</u>

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	(f) <u>The Board may subsequently renew the variance provided the district continues to show how the variance meets or exceeds established standards.</u>
	(g) <u>If the Superintendent of Public Instruction finds the alternative is not working as intended and does not meet or exceed results that could be achieved under established standards, the Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Public Education that the variance be abandoned.</u>
	(h) <u>If the Board accepts the Superintendent's recommendation to abandon a variance, its decision is final.</u>
	(i) <u>A school district may discontinue an approved variance at any time. If it does so, it shall promptly notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Board of Public Education in writing.</u>
(2) A school district may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create a charter school.	(2) (3) A school district may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create a charter school.

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(a) A charter school must provide an education that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Montana Constitution, state law, and school accreditation standards.	No Change
(b) The Board of Public Education may only grant charters to publicly funded schools or programs under the supervision and control of a locally elected board of trustees in an existing school district.	No Change
(c) The procedure by which a school district may apply to create a charter school and by which the Board of Public Education may approve, deny, evaluate, and renew a charter school shall be identical to that outlined in ARM 10.55.604.	No Change
(d) To be proposed by a school district and approved by the Board of Public Education, a charter school shall, at a minimum, guarantee the following:	No Change
(i) school district governance and control;	No Change
(ii) unrestricted, open student access;	No Change

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(iii) compliance with all health and safety laws;	No Change
(iv) teacher licensure and endorsement to the same extent as required or provided by state law or accreditation standards;	No Change
(v) employee collective bargaining to the same extent as required or provided by state law; and	No Change
(vi) a plan for consideration of input by community members and staff as to formation and implementation issues. Consideration of input may be identified by formation of advisory committees involving staff and/or community members, conduct of a properly noticed public meeting for purposes of comment on the formation or operation of the charter school, or any other reasonable means that result in an opportunity for input by staff and community members prior to a decision of significant interest to the public regarding the formation or operation of the charter school.	No Change



Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(e) A school district may discontinue an approved charter school at any time. If it does so, it shall promptly notify the Board of Public Education in writing.	No Change
10.55.605 CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(1) Regular accreditation means the school has:	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(a) its program aligned to the content and performance standards and program area standards;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(b) certified staff that is appropriately assigned, and fully utilized;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(c) school programs and resources that are adequate;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(d) facilities that meet appropriate standards; and	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(e) school trustees, staff, parents, and community that work together to provide a quality education.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(2) When the school meets the regular accreditation standards with minor deviations, these deviations are noted on the annual accreditation status letter as minor citations when considering the school program in its entirety.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(3) Accreditation with advice means the school exhibits serious and/or numerous deviations from the standards. The school must submit an improvement plan developed by trustees, administrators, teachers, parents, and the community, to the Office of Public Instruction.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(4) Deficiency accreditation with assistance means that the school has been on advice status for at least two years and continues to have serious and/or numerous deviations, or has substantially increased the seriousness of deviations over the previous year.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(a) A school will be accredited with deficiency if:	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(i) the school employs as a teacher an individual who does not have a Montana teaching certificate;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(ii) the school has a facility that creates an unhealthy environment with safety and health hazards; or	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(iii) the school provides an inadequate learning environment.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(b) The school administrator and the chair of the board of trustees will submit and/or come before the Board of Public Education with an improvement plan and a systematic procedure for correcting the deviations noted. The Office of Public Instruction will facilitate assistance to enable the school to accomplish the goals of the improvement plan and to correct the deviations.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(5) Nonaccredited status means that a school on deficiency status fails to document that it has met its improvement plan.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
6) A school seeking initial accreditation or reinstatement of accreditation shall meet the requirements of regular accreditation outlined in (1). This process shall include an on-site review from the Office of Public Instruction.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
10.55.606 PERFORMANCE BASED	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
ACCREDITATION	
(1) Performance-based accreditation gives a school district the option of obtaining, for one or more of its schools, accreditation through a process that involves self-evaluation, peer-review and on-site visitations. This method allows a school to meet accreditation standards by showing through its students' work that it provides a quality education. The school improvement plan serves as a basis for assessment of school effectiveness and an impetus for mobilizing improvement efforts.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(2) After engaging in a sustained school improvement effort, a school district, on behalf of one or more of its schools, may apply to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for performance-based accreditation. The Board of Public Education makes the final decision on whether a school is accredited through the performance-based accreditation process. The school improvement process shall incorporate the following six steps or their equivalent:	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(a) development of a student/community profile;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(b) development of a school mission and goals that reflect a locally derived philosophy	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
of education;	
(c) identification of desired learner results based on the content and performance standards;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(d) analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(e) development and implementation of a school improvement plan; and	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(f) monitoring through self-assessment and visits by peers or teams.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(3) To be granted performance-based accreditation, a school must	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(a) engage in a continuous schoolwide improvement process;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(b) host at least two visitations, chaired by a person trained or experienced in the process to seek feedback and validate the school improvement process;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(c) notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the visitation dates and team	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
members. A member of the staff of the Office of Public Instruction shall be invited to be a member of the visitation team;	
(d) submit reports of the visitation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(e) apply to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for performance-based accreditation by providing documentation of school improvement, including, but not limited to:	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(i) visitation reports;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(ii) a school improvement plan;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(iii) evidence of attainment or significant progress toward attainment of the school improvement plan goals; and	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(iv) a recommendation from the visitation team that the Board of Public Education grant performance-based accreditation.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(4) After a review in which the school demonstrates successful attainment or significant progress toward achieving the	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
desired learner results, the school may be granted performance-based accreditation for up to six years. The school is subject to peer or team reviews at least every three years. The review shall establish that:	
(a) the integrity of the school improvement process is maintained;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(b) the school is making informed, data-driven decisions;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(c) the process is school-based;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(d) all steps of the school improvement process are connected and inform one another;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(e) committees work collaboratively within and among one another;	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(f) the school implements each step appropriately; and	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

Administrative Rules of Montana 10.55.601–10.55.606	Recommended Changes
(g) student learning is central to the entire process, with improvement demonstrated in desired learner results, based on content and performance standards.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress
(5) A school district, on behalf of one or more of its accredited schools electing this process, may petition the Superintendent of Public Instruction to recommend that the Board of Public Education waive existing standards that interfere with the school improvement plan, excluding standards stating a statutory requirement, standards pertaining to teacher certification and content and performance standards as defined by the Board of Public Education.	Section Referred to Subcommittee – Work in Progress

